

JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM

IDENTIFICATION FORM

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[R] - ITEM IS RESTRICTED



~~TOP SECRET~~
NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
CENTRAL SECURITY SERVICE
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND 20755

Serial: N0078
26 January 1976

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE (INTELLIGENCE)

SUBJECT: Senate Select Committee Queries to NSA Concerning
the Warren Commission

Reference your letter dated 14 January 1976 transmitting a request from Mr. Alton Quanbeck of the Senate Select Committee Staff. The following information is provided in response to Mr. Quanbeck's letter, keyed by paragraph to his letter (inclosed - see underlined portions). Most of the information was made available to the SSC Staff, Mr. Jim Johnson, during an interview with Dr. Louis Tordella on 20 January 1976.

Para. 1. - NSA requested permission to retain photocopies of those reports on which we had worked merely as record copies of our efforts on behalf of the Commission. It was felt that if a question should arise at that time concerning what analytic efforts had been involved and the number of manhours expended, a record copy would prove useful. No operational use was made of these documents except to hold them on file for a period of time which cannot now be determined. To the best of our present knowledge, the photocopies have now been destroyed. Absolutely no results relevant to the assassination were obtained through NSA's analytic look at the exhibits. The Commission, in the person of Mr. Allan Dulles, had asked Dr. Tordella, informally, to review the exhibits for any secret writing or codes which might have been contained in the documents. Dr. Tordella, after causing a careful review of the documents by NSA cryptanalysts, reported verbally to Mr. Dulles and other Commission members that nothing whatsoever had been achieved by the analytic effort. No written reply was submitted.

Classified by DIRNSA/CWCSS (NSA/CSSM 123-2)
Exempt from GDS, EO 11652, Cat 2
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Released on
08-12-2022 under
the John F.
Kennedy
Assassination
Records Act of
1992

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APPENDED DOCUMENTS CONTAIN
CODEWORD MATERIAL

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Para. 2. - NSA is uncertain as to what is precisely meant by these comments, but we assume that the comments on names refer to our biographic files which are maintained on foreign personalities of potential intelligence significance. As the Committee knows, these biographic files are maintained (now at CIA incidentally) as analytic support. It is also possible that the Commission was referring to the fact that names are frequently seen in traffic collected for foreign intelligence purposes and therefore NSA might have access to foreign names not otherwise available to the Intelligence Community.

Para. 3. - It may well be that CIA did obtain such transmissions and pass them to NSA for analysis, but no one presently working that analytic area recalls such a request. Discussions with Dr. Tordella also failed to shed any light on this subject. There are no files or records which we have been able to locate from that time frame which would substantiate such a claim. In fact, the only file the responsible analytic group has been able to locate concerning a request from the Warren Commission deals with a file compiled from open sources citing major dates in the last months of Oswald's life. Presumably the date file was to be compared with NSA product on/about the key dates in the hope that something could be deduced. The file does not contain any "hits." The analysts who performed this effort have since retired.

Para. 4. - The informal request from Mr. Dulles is the known total extent of NSA's role in assisting in the investigation. The file discussed in Paragraph 3 is the only file thus far recovered. There is no information which can now be identified which was developed from Cuban or Soviet transmissions relating to the assassination.

Para. 5. - We have no information on this subject at all. However, pursuant to the subject raised during the Tordella interview, we have searched our files manually, and as Mr. Lowman agreed during the Tordella interview, we have recovered three product reports (Inclosures 2 through 4) which show that Cuban military forces did go on alert immediately after the assassination. There is no SIGINT evidence, however, that the Cuban forces were alerted prior to the assassination, thereby suggesting that they had prior knowledge of the event.

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Para. 6. - No hard copy material of any kind was provided to the Commission (see Para. 1).



DAVID D. LOWMAN
Special Assistant
to the Director
for Congressional Reviews

4 Incls:
a/s

~~TOP SECRET~~

3
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Serial: N0078

cc: DIR (Less Incls)

D/DIR

ESS

ESS/R

ESS, Mr. Lowman

G, Mr. Peksa

NCRDEF

A, Miss Caracristi (Less Incls)

L221

44 USC 2107(5)(g)(2)(D)(i)

M/R: Inclosures 2 through 4 are product reports numbered
2/O/ R66-63, 2/O/ R196-63 and 2/O/ R58-63.

for Frank Foster
Frank Foster/O/ESS/3161s/26 Jan 76/kjb

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GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and declassification

United States Senate

SELECT COMMITTEE TO
STUDY GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS WITH
RESPECT TO INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

(PURSUANT TO S. RES. 21, 94TH CONGRESS)

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 13, 1976

Mr. Thomas K. Latimer
Special Assistant to the Secretary
U. S. Department of Defense
Washington, D. C. 20301

Dear Tom:

In connection with the Select Committee's investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy, we earlier received answers to certain questions put to NSA. Since then we have examined other material pertaining to NSA's contribution to the Warren Commission's investigation and we desire further information from NSA.

By way of background for this request, we note the Warren Commission provided NSA various documents and asked NSA to review them for any cryptological significance. NSA found no cryptological significance and its report of this fact was published by the Commission.

1. By letter of July 10, 1964, (a copy of which is attached) Mr. Rankin provided General Blake a copy of certain documents requested by Dr. Tordella for NSA's files. Since NSA's analysis of the documents was apparently completed at the time of Rankin's letter, we wish to know why NSA wanted to keep these documents for its file. Further, we wish to know what use, if any, was made of these documents and what results relevant to the assassination were obtained from such use.

2. In a Commission staff internal memorandum, discussing the documents provided NSA, it is reported that NSA is "primarily interested in names," and NSA claims it has "information on names which the CIA does not have." Assuming these statements are accurate, we wish to know what significance such names would have.

~~TOP SECRET~~

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SCHEDULE OF E.O. 13526, DECLASSIFICATION CATEGORY:
§ 5801.12 (3) or (4) (only one or more)
AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON
Impossible to Determine
(unless impossible, insert date or event)

~~HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS~~

3. We are informed that CIA obtained transmissions from the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City for November or December 1963 and that it may have passed these to NSA for analysis. Did NSA receive these transmissions or any transmissions relevant to the assassination inquiry? Did it analyze them? What were the results of its analysis?

5. We have been informed that after the assassination the Cuban government instructed its embassies and consulates to return all files on Oswald to Cuba. What information does NSA have on whether such instructions were issued?

We would appreciate receiving a response to these questions as soon as possible and to expedite this inquiry we are sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Foster of NSA.

22

cc: Frank Foster

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~~LANDING VIA COMBAT CHANNELS~~

JLR:RM/bjc
7/7/64

JUL 10 1964

Lieutenant General Gordon A. Blake, U. S. A. F.
Director, National Security Agency
Fort George G. Meade, Maryland

Dear General Blake:

In regard to Dr. Tordello's request, the National Security Agency is authorized to keep for its file the following photographic copies of items which have been used by the Commission in its investigation:

- (1) Commission Exhibit 31
- (2) Commission Exhibit 15
- (3) Commission Exhibit 104
- (4) Commission Exhibit 18
- (5) Typewritten version of Commission Exhibit 24
- (6) F. B. I. items A-2, A-6
- (7) F. B. I. items 137, 152

Thank you for the cooperation and assistance you have rendered the Commission.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

J. Lee Rankin
General Counsel

REC'D

cc: Mr. Rankin
Mr. Willens
Mr. Mosk

Archives

~~SECRET KIMBO~~

2/0 [] VR56-53

All subordinates of the First Army Headquarters in both Eastern and Southwestern Oriente were placed in an alert status at 2320Z on 22 November 1963 (2/1R1 [] R187-63).

The urgent need of food at the Pilon (probably 19-58N 77-15W) Coastal Battalion was revealed in a message from the Chief, South Sector, Sierra Maestra Headquarters, Pilon, to Chief of Services, First Army Headquarters, on 25 November 1963 (2/1R1 [] T658-63).

PART III B: CUBAN NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS

One of the KOMAR-class PCNs, the UC-250, has suffered one of the first accidents involving a KOMAR vessel in Cuba. At approximately 0630Z on 26 November the UC-250 ran aground while entering the port of Mariel, sustaining uncontrollable leaks. Salvage vessels sent to the scene included the OC-55, 20-12, and 10-28; they were estimated to have worked until 2115Z, when it was reported salvage operations were complete (2/05 [] R579-63 and 2/SL [] R55-63). The UC-250 is now in drydock, presumably at Mariel (2/05 [] R55-63).

A Cuban motorship, under the name of the UC-250, was forced by passengers aboard the vessel to put into the Guantanamo Naval Base on 26 November. Four persons aboard the vessel were reported to have taken asylum at the base but a reliable collateral source states that 11 persons remained at the base and four others returned with the UC-250. The vessel was escorted by a destroyer to the coast leading to Guimaraes (19-54N 75-55W) from the Naval Base (2/1R1 [] R190, 186-63 and 2/05 [] R55-63). A later report disclosed that 12 passengers and 5 crewmen, from along the ship's center, remained at the Guantanamo Naval Base (2/1R1 [] R190-63).

An alert which began on 23 November in Oriente Province was apparently prompted by the death of President KENNEDY. While no orders or directives have been noted cancelling the alert, there were indications that it probably was to terminate on 25 November. On 23 November instructions were passed from bases to a subordinate unit that leaves could be granted to 25 percent of its personnel (2/0 [] R56-63 and 2/0 [] R196-63).

The USS JOSEPH E. MARIEN, TAC-171, has been the subject of recurring Cuban reports concerning its position. These reports have been noted being passed from Havana to Camaguey, the KOMAR-class PCN Headquarters. The reports were first noted in September and have continued until November (2/0 [] R195-63).

The Camaguey Naval Base was informed on 23 November by Naval Headquarters in Havana that there would be exercises scheduled from 23 to 26 November in the Bay of Pigs area by U.S. aircraft. The exercises would include psychophysical and lateral firing, air to ground firing and illumination practices. The information was reported to be a "leak obtained by our sources." These sources were not identified (2/SL [] R30-63).

Incl 2

~~SECRET KIMBO~~

2/0/ [] R196-63
 25 Nov 63 1815Z
 DLST: O/HA
 ST 250

ALERT IN EASTERN NAVAL DISTRICT RELAXED, 23 NOVEMBER

As a result of the death of President KENNEDY, the Eastern Naval District of Cuba was placed on an alert at 2044Z on 22 November by Banes, headquarters for that district. ((A))

3:44 PM
 EST

At 2237Z on 23 November, the alert was relaxed a certain degree by Banes; instructions were passed to Santiago de Cuba, a subordinate, to give leave to 25 percent of their personnel for the 23rd and 24th and that further orders would be forthcoming on 25 November 1963.

COMMENT: The authorization to grant leave to personnel is an indication that the alert is somewhat relaxed and the note that further instructions would be issued on Monday, 25 November indicates that a nonurgent view has been adopted for the situation by Cuban Naval authorities in the Eastern Naval District.

((A)) (2/LRI/[] R11-63, 2/QS/[] R665, R666, R667-63).

Incl 3

~~SECRET KIMBO~~

2/0/ [] R58-63
 26 Nov 63 2019Z
 DIST: O/WA
 ST 250

ALERT IN ORIENTE PROVINCE BELIEVED TO BE TERMINATED

The alert in Oriente Province (see 2/0/ [] R196-63) is believed to be terminated. The alert, apparently prompted by President KENNEDY's death on 22 November, was possibly pre-scheduled to terminate on 25 November. There have been two orders which suggest that the alert was destined to be concluded on 25 November; they are:

- 1) Access to the Coastal Observation Post at Punta Maisi (20-15N 74-08W) was restricted until 25 November because of the alert (see 2/QS/ [] R667-63); and
- 2) Subordinates of Banes Headquarters Eastern Naval District, were to receive further orders on the 25th, presumably concerning their alert status (2/0/ [] R196-63); no such orders have been noted in communications.

There have been no further references in intercepted communications to the alert since 0222Z on 23 November (2/QS/ [] R667-63).

It is possible that the restricted access to the Observation Post at Punta Maisi extends to other Observation Posts in Oriente Province such as reported on 23 November when First Army Coastal Observation Posts were placed in an alert status (2/ R1/ [] R138-63), and that the restriction was to be lifted on 25 November by all those posts.

Further indication that the alert has terminated is the fact that the Cuban Navy was engaged in an island-wide communications exercise on 25 November. It is considered unlikely that such an exercise would be conducted under alert conditions.

There have been no further references to the alert status of the (D percent Santiago de Cuba) units which was first observed on 23 November (2/SL/ [] R05-63). All CRAF and Soviet Forces Cuba communications appear to be normal during this period, 22-26 November 1963.

DIST: O/WA PLUS CC 2ND MAW

Only 4